



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box 42560 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2560 • (360) 902-1800

February 1, 2002

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS

**Department of Agriculture to inspect trees for signs of
Citrus Longhorned Beetle**

Dear Resident,

Sometime in the next two months, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) plans to visit your property to inspect trees for evidence of citrus longhorned beetle activity.

The citrus longhorned beetle was accidentally introduced into the environment in Tukwila in August 2001. It is a devastating pest of many trees and shrubs and is not known to occur in North America.

To stop the beetle, the Department of Agriculture last November established a plant quarantine of all properties lying primarily within a ½-mile of the intersection of Macadam Road South and South 144th Street. The quarantine prohibits the possession, transportation or distribution outside the quarantine area of any living citrus longhorned beetle or any plant material that may be infested with it.

To locate and eradicate the beetles that were introduced into the area, the Department is now conducting a survey of the quarantine area under the authority of state law (RCW 17.24.021 (2)). Survey activities will begin near the center of the quarantine area and will move outward.

WSDA staff will inspect trees using ground and canopy survey techniques. Ground surveys involve tree inspection from ground level. Canopy surveys include tree climbing. If a tree can't be adequately surveyed from the ground due to the height or density of the tree or the tree cannot safely support the weight of the surveyor, canopy surveys may be conducted using a bucket truck.

Surveyors will request your permission before they inspect trees on your property. If no one is at home when they arrive, staff will leave information at the front door and conduct the survey at a later date. All staff will carry appropriate identification and will be able to provide you the names and phone numbers of authorized Department of Agriculture personnel so you can verify their identification.

You need not be concerned about any personal liability if our staff is injured while they survey your property. The State of Washington provides its employees with industrial insurance for injuries that occur while working.

We will make every effort to minimize impacts to the health, vigor and aesthetic value of the tree. However, to adequately detect the presence or absence of the beetle on your property, surveyors may be required to remove bark samples or limbs when inspecting trees. They will request your permission before they remove limbs of any significant size from a tree. In addition, it is possible that homeowners may experience some damage to their property or improvements as a result of survey activities. We are working with the state Office of Risk Management to develop a system property owners can use to file a claim if property is inadvertently damaged by survey activities.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience while we work to eliminate the citrus longhorned beetle in Washington State. A fact sheet about the citrus longhorned beetle, the quarantine, and the survey is enclosed. If you have any questions or would like more information, please call our toll-free hotline at (800) 443-6684 or visit our Web site at <http://www.wa.gov/agr/CitrusLHBeetle.htm>.

Sincerely,



RCW 17.24.021 -- Inspection and investigation.

(1) The director may intercept and hold or order held for inspection, or cause to be inspected while in transit or after arrival at their destination, all plants, plant products, bees, or other articles likely to carry plant pests, bee pests, or noxious weeds being moved into this state from another state, territory, or a foreign country or within or through this state for plant and bee pests and disease.

(2) The director may enter upon public and private premises at reasonable times for the purpose of carrying out this chapter. If the director be denied access, the director may apply to any court of competent jurisdiction for a search warrant authorizing access to such premises. The court may upon such application issue the search warrant for the purposes requested.

(3) The director may adopt rules in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and provisions of this chapter. [1991 c 257 § 6.]